1813

Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

Vol. VIII.—No. 4. BOSTON, MASS., SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1891. Whole No. 186.

"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

The sales of Victor Hugo's works since his death five years ago, not including posthumous works or translations, amount to the enormous sum of a million and a half dollars. And yet we often hear that "no one now reads Hugo."

Society is an imperfect organism, says Prof. Orchardson, of Chicago, but it is being perfected by the State Socialists. This, at any rate, is an improvement upon the Wakeman method of reasoning, which dispenses with minor premises altogether. Society is an organism, says Mr. Wakeman, and therefore long live Nationalism!

One often finds truth where he least expects it. There is a paper published in Chicago called "The Flaming Sword." In most respects it is the craziest periodical that comes to my table. Its editor believes that the earth is a hollow globe, and that mankind lives on the inner surface of the shell. And yet I find more truth in its columns about money and government than is usually contained in the average newspaper entertaining rational astronomical notions.

The London "Church Reformer," edited by Stewart D. Headlam, an ardent believer in Henry George's land theory, says that the Pope's encyclical is "especially accurate in its teaching on the land question." But Michael Corrigan, standing in the pulpit of St. Patrick's cathedral in New York, says regarding the same subject: "We in this diocese, particularly, are under special obligations to the sovereign pontiff, inasmuch as the most strikingly pronounced teachings in this encyclical bear directly on errors that for a time, and to a certain extent at least, found acceptance in New York." Who shall say, then, that the Vatican has not settled the land problem?

The London "Academy" begins a complimentary review of "News from Nowhere" with the following remarks, which will interest Mr. Bellamy: "Not long past, there was published a book, of an ugliness so gross and a vulgarity so pestilent, that it deserved the bonfire and the hangman, the fate of no worse books in a bygone age. The book has been bought by tens of thousands, and by hundreds of thousands, in England and America. Clubs and societies have been called after its author's name. That book is 'Looking Backward.' It purported to give us an insight into the perfected society of the future; and what we saw was a nightmare spectacle of machinery dominating the world."

The Nationalist fever is on the wane. Mr. Bellamy recently had occasion to lament the going astray of the editor of the "Arena," and now Col. Higginson, one of the first whom the fever fastened upon, tells us in the "Christian Union" that the man has not yet arrived who can reconcile Socialism or Nationalism with liberty, and that the boasted difference between Paternalism and Fraternalism is not so very great. All these signs of returning sanity are highly encouraging. But if Col. Higginson, who reads French, had spent as much time over Proudhon's "Solution du Problème Social," "Confessions d'un Révolutionnaire," "Idée Générale de la Révolution," and "Justice," as he has given to the study of Fourier and of Bellamy's "Looking Backward," he would have learned of the arrival, half a century ago, of a man who reconciled, not indeed State Socialism or Nationalism, but the just reward of labor, with the perfect liberty of man.

"Letters to Farmers' Sons," published by the Twentieth Century Publishing Company, *may* contain some good things, — I have not read it, — but it certainly is the latest manifestation of the "illogical mind." What can one think of the consistency and perspicacity of a man who, while expressing contempt for books, invites the public to purchase and read his own book? If he has not thought it proper or wise to consult any books whatever, how can he expect the public — whom he wishes to teach and influence — to consult *his* book? If they follow his example, they will consult no books whatever, and then of the making of books there will be an end. Of course, the fact of his having published the book shows that he wishes the public to be guided by his judgment in other matters, but not in the treatment of books; but they will be apt to think that there can be no profit in reading an author who writes without being sure that he has something new to say.

The May "Contemporary Review" is a dull number; and the dullest and flattest and most insipid article in it belongs to Grant Allen. It is entitled "Democracy and Diamonds," and exhorts those to whom democracy is becoming a true religion to encourage good handicraft and to shun luxury and diamonds. But incidentally Mr. Allen drops a few remarks which are calculated to alarm his Fabian comrades, if not disgust them with their very uncertain new convert. "The world," he says, "will never be revolutionized, as Mr. Edward Bellamy seems to imagine, by one definite act of the American legislature. But it can and will be slowly revolutionized by the gradual growth of higher moral feeling. You cannot take the kingdom of heaven by storm: it must grow up within our souls by organic evolution." — "Only in proportion as individual men attain that moral level will humanity at large become fit for Socialism." Fate, it appears, has not been wholly unmerciful to Mr. Allen. He has turned State Socialist, it is true, but it is a consolation to know that he is neither a revolutionary nor a political agitator, and that he is not in favor of using force to accomplish his ends.

The "Open Court" prints an admirable lecture on "Evolution and Human Progress," of which Professor Le Conte is the author. The last paragraph, however, affords evidence of a tendency to indulge in meaningless (if not worse than meaningless) expressions unpardonable in a real scientific thinker. "This capacity," says the lecturer in all sincerity, "characteristic of man alone, of forming ideals, and this conscious voluntary pursuit of such ideals, whence comes it? When analyzed and reduced to its simplest terms, it is naught else than the consciousness in man of his close relation to the infinite and the attempt to realize the divine in human character." In the mouth of a theologian, of a believer in a divine ruler, such language is entirely rational. But in what sense can an evolutionist and experientialist speak of man's close relation to the infinite? Man is conscious of his ignorance of anything transcending experience in the wide sense, and he cannot attempt to realize the divine because he cannot form any idea of it. The adjective divine is merely used to emphasize the happiness-producing and beautiful and benign attributes of things or acts. Man loves peace and health and beauty, and he consciously pursues his ideals of beauty and health and peace. The infinite has nothing to do with his ideals or his practical attempts to realize them.

I observe that the otherwise excellent indictment of Gen. Ordway, printed in another column, charges that he "gave a false and malicious representation of the character of labor organizations, and adroitly and with purpose wove them in with his allusions to professional rioters and organizations with unpopular names [Anarchists] to convince the militia that there are no differences between them." Did the man who drew this indictment mean to say to the secretary of war that there is a difference between labor organizations and Anarchistic organizations, of such a nature as to warrant the militia in shooting down members of the latter while not molesting members of the former? If not, what did he mean? I fear that this subordinate of Powderly is following his master's cowardly method of making himself and his followers look white by painting the Anarchists black. If this Knight of Labor, when he says that Gen. Ordway "tries to show that such members of a mob as may really be working people or Socialist 'dreamers' are the followers of 'Anarchists' and deserve the same fate" [of being shot], means to admit that Anarchists really do deserve such a fate, — and I can get no other idea from his words, — the substitution of himself for Gen. Ordway as commander of the militia would be a horribly beautiful illustration of the truth of Alphonse Karr's epigram: *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*

My remark that murder is committed only under the influence of passion or by "human beasts" with a low development of social sentiment, while the liberty to drink is insisted upon by the most refined and intelligent men of all ages and classes, is commented upon by the "Voice" as follows: "Jack the Ripper's style of murder is passionate and beastly, and hence 'the fundamental law of associated life' forbids it. If he would only change his style and murder people in a refined and cultured way, — by slow poison, to the tinkling of cut-glass decanters, — he would be put in Parliament, perhaps, and, instead of being hunted by the police, be hunted by the office-seekers. See the difference? Why, of course." With the talk about office-seekers and Parliamentary honors supposed to be in store for rich rum-dealers I am not concerned. Merely observing that the fundamental law of associative life forbids all and any possible "styles" of murder, I wish to know whether the "Voice" is really prepared to justify prohibition by the novel argument implied in the expression "slow poison to the tinkling of cut-glass decanters" used in reference to liquor-dealers' business. In the controversy with Mr. Yarros, the "Voice" pretended to defend prohibition on the sole ground that, among the people whom the dealers tempt to drink, some drink to excess and commit crimes while in an irresponsible state, and insisted that it has the welfare of society, or the third party, at heart. Now the "Voice" tells us that the liquor dealers "murder people" by "slow poison," which, if true, would be a sufficient reason for prohibiting the liquor traffic even if no third party were imperilled. Has the "Voice" changed its position? If not, how can it justify this question-begging talk about murder and slow poison? I should advise the "Voice" to eschew sarcasm and irony, and attend to its logic, which badly needs improving.

Liberty.

Issued Fortnightly at One Dollar a Year; Single Copies Five Cents.

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Office of Publication, 45 Milk Street, Room 7.
Post Office Address: LIBERTY, P. O. Box No. 3366, Boston, Mass.

Entered as Second Class Mail Matter.

BOSTON, MASS., JUNE 13, 1891.

"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

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A Standard of Value a Necessity.

Readers of Liberty will remember an article in No. 184 on "The Functions of Money," reprinted from the Galveston "News." In a letter to the "News" I commented upon this article as follows:

I entirely sympathize with your disposal of the "Evening Post's" attempt to belittle the function of money as a medium of exchange; but do you go far enough when you content yourself with saying that a standard of value is highly desirable? Is it not absolutely necessary? Is money possible without it? If no standard is definitely adopted, and then if paper money is issued, does not the first commodity that the first note is exchanged for immediately become a standard of value? Is not the second holder of the note governed in making his next purchase by what he parted with in his previous sale? Of course it is a very poor standard that is thus arrived at, and one that must come in conflict with other standards adopted in the same indefinite way by other exchanges occurring independently but almost simultaneously with the first one above supposed. But so do gold and silver come in conflict now. Doesn't it all show that the idea of a standard is inseparable from money? Moreover, there is no danger in a standard. The whole trouble disappears with the abolition of the basis privilege.

The "News" printed my letter, and made the following rejoinder:

It will occur that in emphasizing one argument there is such need of passing others by with seeming unconcern that to some minds other truths seem slighted, — truths which also need emphasizing perhaps in an equal, or it may be, for useful practical reasons, in a superior degree. The "News" aims at illustrating one thing at a time, but it is both receptive and grateful to those correspondents who intelligently extend its work and indicate useful subjects for discussion, giving their best thought thereon. A Boston reader, speaking of the standard of value, states an undeniable truth to the effect that, without a thing or things of value to which paper money can be referred and which can ultimately be got for it, such money would be untrustworthy or worthless. The "News" in a past article was discussing primary commerce and the transition to indirect exchange. No agreed standard for valuation is needed while mere barter is the rule; but it is indispensable as soon as circulating notes are issued. The vice of the greenback theory is that the notes do not call for anything in particular, and so, if their volume be doubled, their purchasing power must apparently decline one-half. A note properly based on gold, silver, wheat, cotton, or other commodity has a tangible security behind it. The one thing may be better than the other, but the principle is there in all. It is, however, a notable truth that the standard for valuation can be nothing better than an empirical one. Like mathematical quantities, value has no independent existence, but, unlike mathematical quantities, value has not even existence as a quality of one object. It cannot be compared to a measure of length, which possesses the quality of extension in itself. Gold is assumed to vary little in relation to other things, and they to vary much in relation to gold. Nobody can know how much gold does vary in the relation. The notable steadiness is in the amount of labor which will produce a given quantity and the length of time which it will last. The basis of the assumed steadiness of gold is thus found. But if the standard for use in making valuations be confessedly empirical and value an elusive quality not of things separately but of things in relation, there is a countervailing difference between a standard of length and a standard of value, which results in disposing of the objection that the standard is empirical. Why would it be a serious objection to a yardstick if it were longer or shorter from day to day? Because thus the customer would get more or less cloth than was intended. But why is that? Because the function of the yardstick is to measure for delivery as great a length of cloth as its own length. But now let us visit a bank or insurance office. We want a loan of circulating notes or a policy of insurance. The property offered as security is valued. Assume that gold is taken as the standard, and that the loan or the policy is for $600 on a valuation of $1000. It is no matter in these cases if the standard varies, provided it does not vary to exceed the margin between the valuation and the obligation. The property pledged is merely security for the loan, or, in the case of insurance, the premium paid is a per cent. of the amount insured. The margin between the valuation and the loan is established to make the loan abundantly safe. The policy is safely written through the same expedient. The empirical standard of value has a needful compensation about it which the yardstick or other measure neither has nor needs, — *viz.*, the valuing goods does not deliver them. It is provisional. In case of default in paying back the loan, the goods are sold and the same money borrowed is paid back, but the residue goes to the borrower. It is therefore an efficient compensation for the lack of an invariable standard of value that the actual standard in any case is simply used as a means of estimating limits within which loans are safe. All danger is avoided by giving the borrower the familiar right in case of foreclosure. It is sometimes a fine thing to discover distinctions, but it is frequently a finer thing to discover whether or not the distinctions affect the question.

While not hesitating for a moment to accept the "News's" explanation that, when hinting that a standard of value is not indispensable, it was speaking of barter only, I may point out nevertheless that there was a slip of the pen, and that the words actually used conveyed the idea that something more than barter was in view. Let me quote from the original article:

It is manifest that a medium of exchange is absolutely necessary to all trade beyond barter. A standard of value is highly desirable, but perhaps this is as much as can be safely asserted on that question.

It seems to me a fair interpretation of this language to claim the meaning that in *trade beyond barter* it is not sure that a standard of value is absolutely necessary. And this interpretation receives additional justification when it is remembered that the words were used in answer to the "Evening Post's" contention that, in comparing the two functions of *money*, its office of medium of exchange must be held inferior to its office of measuring values.

However, the "News" now makes it sufficiently clear that a standard of value is absolutely essential to money, thereby taking common ground with me against the position of Comrade Westrup. Still I cannot quite agree to all that it says in comment upon the Westrup view.

First, I question its admission that a measure of value differs from a measure of length in that the former is empirical. True, value is a relation; but then, what is extension? Is not that a relation also, — the relation of an object to space? If so, then the yardstick does not possess the quality of extension in itself, being as dependent for it upon space as gold is dependent for its value upon other commodities. But this is metaphysical and may lead us far; therefore I do not insist, and pass on to a more important consideration.

Second, I question whether the "News's" "countervailing difference between a standard of length and a standard of value" establishes all that it claims. In the supposed case of a bank loan secured by mortgage, the margin between the valuation and the obligation practically secures the note-holder against loss from a decline in the value of the security, but it does not secure him against loss from a decline in the value of the standard, or make it impossible for him to profit by a rise in the value of the standard. Suppose that a farmer, having a farm worth $5,000 in gold, mortgages it to a bank as security for a loan of $2,500 in notes newly issued by the bank against this farm. With these notes he purchases implements from a manufacturer. When the mortgage expires a year later, the borrower fails to lift it. Meanwhile gold has declined in value. The farm is sold under the hammer, and brings, instead of $5,000 in gold, $6,000 in gold. Of this sum $2,500 is used to meet the notes held by the manufacturer who took them a year before in payment for the implements sold to the farmer. Now, can the manufacturer buy back his implements with $2,500 in gold? Manifestly not, for by the hypothesis gold has gone down. Why, then, is not this manufacturer a sufferer from the variation in the standard of value, precisely as the man who buys cloth with a short yardstick and sells it with a long one is a sufferer from the variation in the standard of length? The claim that a standard of value varies, and inflicts damage by its variations, is perfectly sound, but the same is true, not only of the standard of value, but of every valuable commodity as well. Even if there were no standard of value and therefore no money, still nothing could prevent a partial failure of the wheat crop from enhancing the value of every bushel of wheat. Such evils, so far as they arise from natural causes, are in the nature of inevitable disasters and must be borne. But they are of no force whatever as an argument against the adoption of a standard of value. If every yardstick in existence, instead of constantly remaining thirty-six inches long, were to vary from day to day within the limits of thirty-five and thirty-seven inches, we should still be better off than with no yardstick at all. But it would be no more foolish to abolish the yardstick because of such a defect than it would be to abolish the standard of value, and therefore money, simply because no commodity can be found for a standard which is not subject to the law of supply and demand.

T.

State Socialism's Scylla and Charybdis.

Any one who has been watching the New York "Voice" with half an eye for the past year, and noticed the space and attention which that organ of prohibition has been devoting to the various phases of the labor movement, knows very well that the design is to exploit the industrial revolt in the interest of the National Prohibition party. The campaign which it carried on at the doors of the recent Cincinnati conference made this motive manifest to the blindest. But that conference, though a majority of the delegates composing it were, in my judgment, Prohibitionists, had the prudence to smother the issue thus raised, which it could only do by howling it down. Hence the disappointed "Voice" condemns the conference utterly, and calls on all Prohibitionists to withdraw their support from the newly-formed People's party. But this call will be heeded only partially. A large section of the Prohibitionists will still try to engraft their view upon the People's party platform. Banished for the moment, the question of prohibition of liquor-selling will surely return to torment the friends of prohibition of money-issuing. And it ought to. All the prohibitions of non-invasive acts go together, and in this fact lies the safety of liberty. Nothing so militates against the advent of State Socialism as the necessity of accepting each application of its principle having enough particular friends to force it. Each faction insists on its pet prohibition, and, unless it can have it, refuses to support the other prohibitions, from which situation one of two things follows: either the whole prohibitory movement splits up into factions, no one of which is strong enough to carry its point alone; or else all the prohibitions are bundled together, and then those friends of each who are unable to swallow the whole dose secede in sufficient numbers to make defeat certain. The passage between the Scylla of division and the Charybdis of union is destined to narrow down till it wrecks the craft of democratic authority.

T.

Satire and Fools.

"Today" attempts to justify its foolish remark concerning "My Uncle Benjamin's" "gratuitously blasphemous" raillery by the following argument: "If a man has absolutely no belief in the God of Christianity, he will not be much interested in blasphemy against this God. Men, on the other hand, who have some faith in Christianity, find blasphemy distinctly disagreeable. There can be no doubt that the great majority of people in this country belong to the latter class. Surely one may remark this without setting up for an authority upon the doctrines of Original Sin, the Atonement, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Trinity, and what not. Doubtless there are a few, recently emancipated from a narrow conception of Christianity in which the terrors threatened take up most of the attention, or who have a lingering fear that what they have been taught in their childhood may after all be true, and these like to blaspheme, very much as boys whistle in the dark to keep their courage up. We would be the last people in the world to interfere with the expedients of these in which they find solace; but a book designed for the general public cannot pander to such tastes very much without losing in the opinion of a far more numerous and, on the whole, not less intelligent class." At first blush this appears exceedingly reasonable and even convincing; but a little thought suffices to make one realize its unfathomable silliness and exclaim with Editor Reitzel, "Beware of men who absolutely lack the sense of humor, this grandest gift of the gods!" The writer of the above apology certainly lacks the sense of humor, and he is to be sincerely pitied. Why, he must be dead and blunt to the exquisite satire of Rabelais, Voltaire, Byron, and other geniuses, who pandered to the depraved taste of the imperfectly emancipated and nervous victims of superstition! But, while sympathy may be freely lavished upon him, it would be a waste of energy to argue with a man who cannot see that, when fools are the theme, satire should be the song. To be sure, the "Today" writer says that the great majority of people in this country, those who, as he alleges, have some faith in Christianity and turn away in disgust from blasphemy, are, "on the whole," not less intelligent than those who regard the Christian religion with the contempt which it deserves. But he begs the question when he talks of their being *on the whole* not less intelligent. Of course, many Christians profess very rational views on politics; while many infidels blindly worship political fetiches. Whether the Christian majority is really not less intelligent on the whole than the infidel minority may be left an open question. But no man of sense can pretend that the Christian is as scientific and logical in believing in his ridiculous absurdities as the infidel is in scoffing at them. So far then as the Christians are fools (and they are fools just so far as they are Christians), satire may wisely be the song when they are the theme. Moreover, it is simply not true that the Christian majority find blasphemy disagreeable. Only a small and fanatical minority really dislike it. The majority of Christians relish such blasphemy as "My Uncle Benjamin's" and devour it with keen avidity. Nor is it true that those who have absolutely no belief in Christianity are not interested in blasphemy. They are very much interested, at least such as are not without the sense of humor; and the "Today" writer has no business to judge their feelings by his own. Finally, if satire is to be tabooed, and men's superstitions handled respectfully and gently, why distinguish between religious superstitions and political superstitions? "Today" ridicules the American army and navy, the American congress, and the great American parties without compunction. Have not these sincere partisans and defenders? The great majority of the American people do not believe in the individualism advocated by "Today," and they do not enjoy seeing their sacred beliefs and idols treated with scornful contempt. Yet "Today" utterly disregards the feelings of these good citizens. But, all this, I fear, is perilously near the line where serious argument begins, and, as I have just said, it is useless to argue this question with one who lacks the sense of humor.

V. Y.

Reform in Many Spheres.

The way of the transgressor is hard, and every reformer and progressive innovator is looked upon as a transgressor to whom no quarter should be given and no mercy shown. Not that the mysterious law of compensation entirely fails here: in reform still abideth much fun. But the fun is of a peculiar kind, and none but the trained and hardened devotees ever experience it. It is not easy to reform the world, which, naturally enough, objects to being incessantly lectured upon its faults, bad habits, vices, and ignorance. The reformers cannot reasonably condemn the average man for his determination to make the most of the few good things he is allowed to enjoy, and for his decision to bear resignedly the ills he is habituated to. But no more can the average man justly condemn the reformer for refusing to heed his vain cry for peace when there is no peace and when real peace is impossible to the great majority. The average man never falls into a more comical error than when he supposes that his practical philosophy, his happy and wise policy, are totally unknown to the restless and nervous agitators. The reformer is fully aware of the great truths that half a loaf is better than none, and that life is short; but he cannot forget, at the same time, that, but for him, things would have been far worse than they are. His successes in the past encourage and stimulate him; having given the world so much, he is fain to complete his task and give it all that he deems worth having. The reformer is often guilty of injustice toward the present, often too reckless and contemptuous and hasty; but it is to be remembered that his conservative antagonist too often displays extreme cowardice, suspicion, and blind aversion to change. Still, for these extremists only explanations may be found, not excuses. As for indulging and following them, that is out of the question. Fortunately, real and literal extremists are few and far between; most of those whom the world lumps with the extremists are simply victims of the world's dulness or carelessness. Theoretically every reasoning and logical person is an extremist, — a bold and fearless explorer and champion of truth. Practically, no reasoning man is an extremist; for he who grasps a great problem in all its complexity and plenitude cannot possibly be deceived as to difficulties in the way of accomplishing a radical reform.

No reform is easy, but the heaviest burden is carried by the political (using the word in its broad signification) reformer. It is not easy to fight prejudice, habit, routine, custom, even when not backed by brute force; how much more serious an undertaking it must be to fight interests, institutions, arrangements, and contrivances sanctified by stupidity and jealously defended by armies. Where there is nothing but popular folly and prejudice to overcome, reformers need only patience, perseverance, firmness, and courage. Sooner or later their worth, or the worth of their ideas and schemes, is appreciated by at least a portion of so-called enlightened society. Indeed, candor compels the admission that sterling merit and great genius are not even neglected very long by the cultured elements of modern society. At first the opposition is bitter; but the struggle is usually brief and terminates in favor of the representative of progress. Social reformers are not so fortunate. Though, if they are wise and clear-sighted, they are no longer compelled to face the dangers and sufferings from which their prototypes had no chance of escape; though in civilized lands they are permitted to carry on their work and plant the seeds of progress, — nevertheless the struggle between them and the beneficiaries of privilege and injustice promises to be both long and bitter. There is nothing inexplicable or unnatural in this; the contrast, the difference is all that I here emphasize, preliminary to a few remarks on certain progressive phenomena in other spheres than the political. Do you doubt the reality of this contrast? It will be sufficient to mention a few names and the movements with which they are identified to dispel all doubt. The treatment which Herbert Spencer has received and is receiving at the hands of the pseudo-educators of English youth, of university teachers and professors of moral and political sciences, has not prevented his doctrines and ideas from spreading and influencing the thought of Europe. While mediocre respectability and learned littleness preserve the attitude of indifference, Spencer's philosophy is conquering the thinking world. The petty and dwarfish enemies are forgotten, disregarded, or dismissed with a contemptuous smile, while he, almost without a struggle, triumphs over all opposition. Or take Ibsen. Have the paltry and venomous "critics" of the obscurantist press succeeded in alienating the sympathies of the intelligent admirers of the drama from him? Have their stupidities and denunciations and affected sarcasm interfered to any appreciable degree with the growth of his fame? They have only made themselves ridiculous in the eyes of their discriminating readers, who have learned to despise them and to expect nothing good from them. And Zola? No novelist was ever more cordially hated, more intemperately abused, more persistently misrepresented and misunderstood, than this greatest of modern imaginative writers. Yet, where are now the canting moralists, the hypocritical pietists, the *bourgeois* optimists, the defenders of literary traditions and conventions, and the rest of the noisy and excited liliputian army? Their place truly knoweth them no more; while Zola has taken the place to which his colossal qualities entitle him.

And now can anybody, with these palpable facts in view, pretend that the field of practical political reform yields similar signs or proofs of the strength of new ideas? What success do political reformers meet with? To ask such questions is to answer them. In the one case there is liberty, there is opportunity, and the possibility of competition and experiment; in the other, there is a total absence of liberty and opportunity. The brute force of organized despotism is always ready to crush the slightest attempt at political reform. In the one case there is no law and no order except as these spring from liberty and are embraced by free minds after thorough discussion; in the other there is law and order, fixed and unalterable, to which all must bow and submit until a majority of imbeciles get ready to inaugurate a reform which has ceased to be a reform.

Where there is liberty and opportunity, there abuses are very short-lived and evils tend to defeat themselves. What, for instance, does this movement in favor of so-called independent theatres teach us? The managers are after cash, of course, with no cares about the present condition or the future prospects of the drama. They pervert and corrupt the public taste, and render the production of artistic and fine work unprofitable and impossible. It indeed appears to be a hopeless case, and there are never wanting prophets of evil and pessimists who can see no salvation save in the suppression of liberty. The drama cannot survive under freedom, it is perishing, disappearing, and the State alone can rehabilitate it by protective, if not prohibitive, measures. So it seems, and so it is argued. But suddenly one or two young and ardent lovers of the drama and of liberty appear on the scene and plan and build an independent theatre, a theatre for art and not for money, a theatre which creates a public. No State patronage, simply private enterprise, and the drama is saved, revivified, glorified. Paris takes the initiative, Berlin and London follow, and Boston has a dream which is not all a dream.

This, as everybody knows, is an age of magazines and pamphlets. Our magazines are many and excellent. Discussion is free; kings and workmen meet on equal terms in the arena; nothing is too sacred for canvass. To follow the magazines is a liberal education. But many young writers and promising workers complain that the editors are slow to recognize and reward merit, and that authors with names and reputations can dispose of anything, however worthless intrinsically. The complaint is just, the grievance real. But the young authors need not despair. "The fact is," writes one who is to be trusted, "that a change is rapidly coming over the opinions of our literary purveyors. Famous names have been worked to death in connection with books, articles, and everything else. A well-known name counts, without a doubt, but not so much as it has. Something must go with the name. A publisher may sell a poor book or a weak article with some big name attached to it, but he can't do it

a second time, and the author's reputation suffers with that of the publisher's imprint. The magazine which this year sells on account of the contributors' names it presents attached to poor materials feels the mistake next year. I was talking on this point with an editor only a few days ago, and he said: 'I find that the reading public is becoming more and more impatient with big names. The question is, Is the story a good one? Is the poem meritorious? Why, the four most successful hits in my magazine last year were two anonymous contributions and two from authors whose names no one in our office even knew when the manuscript came in. We heard more from those four stories and articles than anything else, although we published some big authors last year.' And I find much the same state of affairs in other offices where I inquired. The change is a good one, for it means that editors and publishers will be more than ever ready and willing to help the rising school of authors."

A step in the right direction, to be sure; but it seems that much more is needed to make our magazines what they ought to be. The need for an independent magazine is certainly not as urgent as the need for an independent theatre, yet even that is coming. "There is in the air here," says a New York correspondent of a literary journal, "rumor of a magazine which may see light before very long. It has one thing in its favor from the start,— it is unique, and will be unlike anything ever attempted before in the periodical world. The policy of the magazine will be based on the belief that the very best things written today never see publication. The reasons are that the editors are afraid of innovations; from experience they know what pleases their readers most, and month after month they sail in the same waters. A striking piece of work comes along, the editor recognizes its distinct individuality, but he is afraid to put it into his magazine, and his apprehension is more than endorsed by the publishing department and from the proprietor's chair. Now, this is the very piece of work upon which this new magazine will thrive. What others concede is strikingly meritorious but somewhat out of their line will be directly within the scope of this literary newcomer. It will not be sensational in any respect, on the contrary, it will cater to the best intellects. It will be high in price — probably a dollar a single issue. The business department will be made distinctly secondary — advertisements will be taken, but not solicited. They will also come high. The aim of the magazine is not a pecuniary one, but entirely in the interest of creating an American literature which, it is claimed, is smothered by present editorial policies. This scheme is the idea of J. M. Stoddard, the editor of 'Lippincott's Magazine.' It is he who has the whole plan in hand and is working it out. I can say for it the idea is in no sense visionary."

Another abuse that has been the subject of warm debate and passionate attack is anonymous reviewing. Now those who watch literary tendencies cannot fail to see that this abuse shows signs of decay, and that its days are numbered. The practice of responsible and honest reviewing is certainly coming into vogue, to the advantage of literature and human nature.

It should not be inferred that I look forward to the speedy and total disappearance of all vice and all imperfection from these fields of human activity. Doubtless the reign of perfection is still remote; other abuses, other evils, will doubtless be generated when those now present will have disappeared. But there will be little vitality in them, and they will cause no great harm. The fit, the excellent, the honorable will find it less and less difficult to survive and conquer evil. Of politics, however, this cannot be affirmed.

V. Y.

Editor Frank K. Foster, of the "Labor Leader," will be an Anarchist before he knows it. Indeed, it might almost be said that he is already an Anarchist and does not know it. Reprinting in his paper the whole of Spencer's long article, "From Freedom to Bondage," he says of it: "It should cause serious reflection on the part of those who hope to achieve by force of law upon community that which is not to be expected from the individuals making up the community. It may be that Mr. Spencer underrates the necessity for coercive association in the industrial world. I am myself of that opinion. *And yet this necessity largely springs from the restriction of free competition brought about by legislative enactment for the privileged classes.* There is probably no trade unionist but regrets the necessity for this coercion. It should be noted, however, that the voluntary principle does run through most trade associations. The man who does not infringe upon the industrial rights of others — in doing which he properly comes within the scope of coercion — is left virtually free to choose his own pathway. A Socialistic State would greatly lessen this freedom, for what is now accomplished by moral suasion and appeal to the social faculties would then be enforced by the arm of the law. Mr. Spencer's article should at least stimulate thought, and the objections he raises to the Socialistic *régime* cannot be pooh-poohed away. The test of actual affairs must be used to demonstrate their wisdom or fallacy." The words which I have italicized contain the essence of the Anarchistic position. They cannot be pooh-poohed, as Mr. Foster says. On this point he ought to be good authority, for he has spent many years in trying to pooh-pooh them. It is only within a few months that he has perceived the futility of the endeavor. Mr. Foster is far along in the path which has already brought Joseph A. Labadie, George A. Schilling, Thomas F. Hagerty, and many other prominent labor leaders into the camp of the Anarchists. And yet the "Journal of the Knights of Labor" says that we have no influence worth mentioning.

Plumb-Line Pointers.

The Comstock — Tyner — Blair — St. John people might put their time to worse use than devoting it to the study of these sentences of Bulwer's Paul Clifford: "Oh, mankind, what noble creatures you ought to be! You have keys to all sciences, arts, and mysteries but one! You cannot frame a tolerable law for the life and soul of you. You lay down rules it is impossible to comprehend, much less to obey. You call each other monsters because you cannot conquer the impossibility! You invent all sorts of vices, under pretence of making laws for promoting virtue. You make yourselves as uncomfortable as you can by all sorts of galling, vexatious institutions."

I think you wrong in your condemnation of the payment of interest. As it is for the advantage of the community that the people should not consume all they produce, but should economize in their personal consumption to add to the funds employed in raising useful products, it is desirable that, out of the produce raised by means of their savings, they should receive some remuneration for their abstinence. — *John Stuart Mill.*

It would seem that abstinence is its own reward. If a man abstains from spending the sum of ten dollars in harmful indulgence, he receives remuneration in three ways for that abstinence. He has, first, the increased virility of character which resistance to temptation gives to all who thus put forth their strength; secondly, his physical vigor has not been impaired; and, thirdly, *he has the ten dollars*, which he did not unwisely spend. Why should some financially unfortunate or mentally decrepit person be taxed to bestow upon him an *additional* reward for doing that which was wholly for his own benefit? If the borrower restores intact the sum borrowed, what more can equity demand? But there is the *risk*, you say? Ah! then interest is a premium to cover costs of insurance, *not* a reward for abstinence! Well, then, when the sum borrowed is returned, together with such further sum as represents the actual expenses incurred by the lender in the various stages of the transaction, is not the demand of equity satisfied? Could the lender secure more than this if there were not a monopoly of the opportunity to issue money?

The New York "Sun" reports Ward McAllister as saying that "the Princess of Wales is the best-dressed woman in the world. I don't believe that she ever wears the same dress twice, and she has her hair dressed in Paris every day. She wears false hair, you know, and she sends her wigs over to Paris daily. While one wig is going across the channel to France to be dressed, the other is coming to London." Are the lessons of history utterly lost upon such intellectual and moral ciphers as the leader of New York's worthless Four Hundred? If he possessed the sense of a common pickpocket, would he flaunt the wicked extravagances of the parasites in the face of the robbed producers of the world? Did it never occur to him that '89 was the rotten-ripe fruit of a tree of spoliation of the same species as the one of which he is inanely babbling? Will the multitudes of English women who are fortunate if they get one cheap dress apiece each year always contentedly moil in hopeless drudgery in order to provide the Princess of Wales with a costly gown each day of their sorrowful lives? Is he too dull to imagine that they might some day take it into their heads to present her with a robe which she would wear but once and yet never lay aside? Were they not sunk in the abysses of ignorance, how many of these mothers would willingly deny their children food that the wife of a scion of the blood-sucking House of Brunswick might have her wigs dressed in Paris?

The State-Church vampire is never really fulfilling his mission except when producing misery. A dispatch from Columbus, Ohio, states that a raid was made on the Casino Theatre for giving a performance on Sunday. Among those arrested was H. B. Keller, scenic artist. His wife, learning of her husband's arrest, followed the patrol wagon to the station. When she started to leave, she was prostrated by a stroke of brain paralysis and died within an hour. Keller had invaded the rights of no one, yet he was arrested, and the excitement thereby induced in the mind of his wife killed her. This is but one crime among millions which the authoritarian monster commits. Is it possible to awaken thought?

The case of Clarence L. Swartz is one that I must respectfully refer to Mr. Eugene M. Macdonald and other secularists who think that a press censorship is not particularly dangerous unless exercised by the Federal Government. State and municipal meddling with the reading matter of the people, so these gentlemen have maintained in various controversies with me, was not likely to ultimate in any serious abridgment of citizens' rights. It was the Federal courts alone which constituted a grave menace to the liberty of expression, publication, and dissemination. When M. Harman, Geo. S. Harman, and E. C. Walker were arrested in Kansas under the Comstock statute, the bail for each was fixed at five hundred dollars, which was readily furnished, and the accused parties were at once released from custody. Subsequently, continuances and postponements were granted, and the bail was not increased. Clarence L. Swartz was arrested under a *State* law against sensational literature, a law passed last winter by the "Reform" (Alliance) legislature, and for weeks he lay in jail because he could not give bail in the sum of *four thousand dollars*. Under State law he was required by a State court to give a bond EIGHT times greater than that exacted of us by the Federal court under the Federal law. The Supreme Court of the State subsequently reduced the bail to two thousand dollars, — still *four* times greater than the one fixed by the Federal court in our cases. When a mere law machine occupies the bench, does it make any particular difference to the accused what the jurisdiction of the power is which licenses said law-machine to grind and crush the flesh and bones of the helpless victim?

A large number of people who think that they are the friends of civil and religious liberty are active workers in the new "People's Party." As an earnest of what they intend when they get into power, nationally, take the anti-sensational literature law passed by the Kansas legislature only a few months ago. In that legislature the "People's Party of Kansas" had an overwhelming majority in the lower house, and it could easily have defeated the intended legislation, the first fruit of the operation of which was the imprisonment, through failure to obtain the enormous bail demanded, of C. L. Swartz, a clearer thinker and purer man than any one who occupies any position in the People's Party today. And yet scores of men and women who privately assure us that they are with us *for* the end are active hustlers for the People's Party, chaplain-fenced and Comstock-blessed! Hull, Todd, Diggs, Hill, Shearer, Frey, Wilkins, Norton, — to you and your class in general I peal the Macedonian cry: I exhort you to separate yourselves from the unclean thing and come over and help us. Have you noted the banner under which you serve? It is the ominous black cross of sacerdotalism, stained and clotted with blood.

At the Cincinnati Conference I met active workers for the "Third Party," including public speakers and editors, who, when I presented Proudhon's works, innocently asked: "Who is Proudhon? I never heard of him!" And these are of those who expect to rejuvenate the nations by a few "Be it enacted," etc. No wonder.

E. C. WALKER.

Gen. Ordway's Removal Demanded.

The following, taken from the Washington "Star" of May 25, shows that the Knights of Labor are after the scalp of Gen. Albert Ordway. I hope they may get it. If they do, their success will establish an excellent *raison d'être* for an organization seemingly at the door of deserved death. It is gratifying to know that the prime mover in the matter is a subscriber to Liberty, Paul T. Bowen.

This morning a committe composed of Messrs. Paul T. Bowen, L. P. Wild, and E. W. Hambleton, representing District Assembly No. 66, Knights of Labor, called upon the Secretary of War and presented to him charges against Brigadier Gen. Albert Ordway, commanding the National Guard of the District of Columbia. The Secretary informed the committee that he would give his personal attention to the charges, and, in case he found that they involved matters not in his jurisdiction, would forward them to the President.

The full text of the charges is as follows:

This assembly is composed of delegates from labor organizations of this city, as follows: Plasterers, carpenters, painters, tinners, bakers, tailors, butchers, engineers, machinists, barbers, plate-printers, drivers, paper-hangers, molders, carriage-makers, musicians, clerks, and five local assemblies with miscellaneous membership.

By direction of this district assembly we charge that Gen. Albert Ordway of the District National Guard, in a lecture to the officers of said guard, delivered the 4th instant, as reported in the "Evening Star" of the 9th instant, a copy of which is inclosed herewith, used language that was treasonable and incendiary and calculated to create in the minds of the militia officers a sense of their superiority to the law, an excessive fear of the dangers to be encountered in the line of their duty, and a bitter hatred and bloodthirsty vindictiveness toward such people as they may be called upon to restrain in the interest of peace and good order.

We charge that, when he abandoned the field of instructions in the proper military tactics to be used in the suppression of civil disorder, to elucidate, compare, and condemn social, political, and economic doctrines, he exceeded his proper function.

We recognize the propriety of instructing the militia as to their relations to the civil powers, but we assert that they should be taught their responsibilities to the law, and not their independence of it. We charge Gen. Ordway with treasonable utterances when he denied that the law "from its exalted throne judges both its assailants and its defenders" and declared that "the impression is too general and has been too long uncontradicted" that a military officer is responsible to civil or military courts for the manner in which he performs his duties, and that to admit such a doctrine "would paralyze the efficiency of the military force and make all their efforts weak and vacillating."

That to which Gen. Ordway "cannot agree" and which he "ventures to contradict" has been a "general impression" "long uncontradicted" because it is the law and the only law that could be tolerated by a free people. Gen. Ordway has given perverted and false instruction in military law to his subordinate officers and shown himself thereby to be unfit for his position.

We further charge that Gen. Ordway, in depicting a country "overrun with hundreds of thousands of the most criminal and ignorant classes of Europe," in whose wake "come the professional agitators, who may be called the pimps of the professional leaders," but who have "had a military education" and "experience in war," and in warning the militia that if they "ever have occasion to meet these men" they will be found "no tyros in the art of war and a match for the best intelligence that we can bring to bear against them," has done what he could to excite alarm and panic where coolness and courage should prevail, and to precipitate the catastrophes in the shape of shooting women, children, spectators, and passers-by, which so often characterize the action of timid and panic-stricken militia. We assert that the picture is almost wholly fanciful, and, so far as this community is concerned, is absolutely so. That it is so generally may be inferred from the fact that in Fourmies, France, where desperate and martial rioters might be supposed to abound if anywhere, the collision between the troops and "rioters" on May 1 resulted in the death of two score people, of whom eight were women, six were children, and the rest were wage-workers. "The lambs attacked the wolves" again!

We charge Gen. Ordway with unjust discrimination in the discussion of the characters of mobs. Having entered upon the subject of "internal disorder," he should not have singled out labor organizations, Socialists, and Anarchists for sole comment. What are the duties of the militia when a mob led by lawyers, doctors, and policemen, after two days' advertisement of their intentions, breaks in a jail, takes from the custody of the law and murders eleven helpless people? Is it the duty of the militia to disappear with the mayor and governor? What should soldiers do when a soldier mob at Walla Walla breaks into a jail and kills a man? What is the duty of the militia when a mob of Pinkerton detectives invade a State with murderous intent? What shall the militia do when two men, as in Connecticut, or three, as in Nebraska, backed by their respective adherents, insist on being governors? What shall the militia do when fraud, bribery, intimidation, violence, and false counting return a false result at elections, and the real majority refuse to submit? These are more important and more imminent questions than the dangers from industrial demonstrations.

These are "internal disorders" worth talking about, but Gen. Ordway seems not to know that the militia has any concern with them.

We charge that Gen. Ordway gave a false and malicious representation of the character of labor organizations, and adroitly and with a purpose wove them in with his allusions to "professional rioters" and organizations with unpopular names to convince the militia that there are no differences between them. His summing up is that "any mob which has been organized under the plea of wrongs of labor to be redressed is in reality composed of at least eighty-five per cent. of roughs, tramps, thieves, convicts, and Anarchists," and that the "soldier need have no compunctions in effectually eradicating them." He tries to show that such members of a mob as may really be working people or Socialist "dreamers" are the followers of "Anarchists" and deserve the same fate, and rejoices that "effectually eradicating them," which might "otherwise be a duty, will become a pleasure."

Gen. Ordway seems to have observed the natural reluctance of soldiers to shoot their own neighbors which is manifested so frequently of late in Europe. Unless he had misgivings that respect for the law on one hand and "compunctions" against "eradicating" people on the other would impair the efficiency of the militia, his remarks had no point.

He argued: first, that the militia need have no fear of the law; second, that they need have great fear of mobs and their leaders; and third, that all the people in a mob are fit only to be "effectually eradicated" not only without "compunctions," but with "pleasure."

There are two safeguards against the catastrophes to which Gen. Ordway's instructions tend. One is that we may reasonably hope that his subordinates are so far superior to him that they will ignore his foolish talk. The other is that a street riot in Washington, so far as labor organizations, Socialists, or Anarchists are concerned, will never occur.

Another safeguard can be added by the War Department in the shape of the removal of Gen. Ordway from the command of the District National Guard and the appointment of some fit person to the position. There are undoubtedly men who combine with the necessary military qualifications a due sense of the supremacy of the law, a spirit not appalled by imaginary dangers from "labor agitators," a humane regard for human life, even when it is necessary to take it, a zeal for the protection of property without a zeal for the destruction of men, a capacity to keep his instructions within his profession and his knowledge and to hold his tongue upon matters of which he knows nothing, and other things which in a soldier make the difference between a man and a bully.

We, therefore, request the War Department to take the proper steps to discipline Gen. Ordway and to remove him from a position where he is a menace to the peace and good order of the community.

We have also to state that it is the intention of this district assembly to call the attention of Congress to the matter as soon as practicable.

Free Copyright and the Devil's Advocate.

To the Editor of Liberty:

Mr. Yarros was once frank enough to express with regard to myself the most exalted contempt for debate with an individual who was — well, who was so completely the reverse of everything that Mr. Yarros manifestly is. And notwithstanding that since that time my comrade has several times unguardedly permitted himself to notice my existence and even my intellect, I am too well aware of his settled convictions, not only concerning myself but indeed the majority of his contemporaries, to be thereby deceived. Now, I have too great a respect for the rights and benefits of the boycott, in all its degrees, not to meet any man half-way who proposes to boycott myself. I therefore hasten to assure Mr. Yarros, if he should happen to read this, that what I am about to say was not written with any desire to provoke him to discussion. It is addressed to the general reader of Liberty, and merely describes a mental debate suggested by reading his "Land and Ideas as Property."

And of course ideas so crude, not to say idiotic, expressed in terms so unscientific, will be beneath his notice.

Having premised so much by way of a sop to Cerberus, you and I, dear reader, are free, perhaps, to amuse ourselves in our own childlike way.

Now, I have a habit of keeping a "Devil's Advocate," and, whenever I hear arguments that conflict with my convictions, I appoint him to plead their cause before me in opposition to my Own Advocate. The Devil's Advocate is a good fellow, who amuses me greatly, and very often convinces me, and obliges me to give sentence in his favor.

The argument that he this time placed before me was to this effect: "May it please the Court! — If a man first discovers, occupies, and uses a certain train of thought, expressed concretely in a certain form, — a book, for instance, — I claim that, by reason of such occupation and priority of discovery, all other men are as rightfully excluded as they would be from a piece of land which the first discoverer occupied in usufruct. As a farmer is entitled to the whole product of his labor on his land, even so is an author entitled to the whole product of his labor on his domain of ideas. Therefore copyright is justified by usufruct, and it is just as clearly an invasion for one man to copy another man's book as it would be for one farmer to copy — to —" Here it appeared to the Court that the D. A. was confused or had forgotten something; however, after a momentary pause, he looked complacently around and sat down as if he had made a good finish.

To this my Own Advocate promptly replied: "Your Honor! — This question can only be decided by reference to the principle of equal liberty. If A takes up and occupies a bit of land sufficient only for his maintenance, it is manifest that B cannot occupy, or attempt to occupy, the same without invasion. But this is a matter of usufruct, and not at all of copyright. The fact that A occupies and uses a piece of land prevents B from occupying the same land, but there is nothing in equity to prevent his taking up a similar piece of unoccupied land and farming it in precisely the same manner. This is imitation, not invasion. There is nothing in the agricultural ethics of any country to prevent B, who is a good imitator, from copying all the original experiments of A, who is a good inventor, exactly. It is recognized among the unsophisticated sons of the soil that B has as good a right to use his faculty of imitation as A his faculty of origination, and adjudged that B's doing so does A no harm. Now, your Honor, I claim that it was a sudden perception of this that caused my opponent to break down. He knows there is no question of copyright among farmers. They all copy. And, your Honor, first discovery has nothing to do with just ownership anyhow. It is not the man who first discovers a bee-tree, but the man who first chops his mark on it, who owns it, according to the law of the woods. Not the hunter who first sees the deer, but he who kills it, has the venison. The man who first finds a diamond and leaves it as a thing of no value does not own it, but the finder who picks it up and polishes or sets it. It is labor that gives a valid title to possession, and abandonment annuls even that. But all this again, your Honor, is a matter of ownership, and not of copyright. Discoveries can be repeated — that is, copied — indefinitely without invasion. Ferocious navigators, indifferent alike to usufruct and liberty, have indeed set the example of claiming for themselves, or their tyrants, the new countries they discovered, people and all (a poor precedent that for a teacher of liberty), but I never heard that they forbade the imitation of the act of discovery. And indeed, your Honor, I think none of these monopolists of copyright care anything about the *act* of imitation; it is the reward of that act that they plot to steal away. They are like the medical monopolists, — anybody may prescribe, but only the 'regulars' may take pay. Not the patient, but the doctor's pocket is 'protected.'

"Truth, from which ideas are derived, air, water, sunlight, land, are all alike in this, — that everyone may use what he needs of that which is not in use. It is only in the domains of the first and the last that monopoly has often been attempted, and always with disastrous results. And in all these universal human experience has proved that imitation, free and frequent, is of inestimable value. Usufruct never forbids it. The knowledge that is in my brain is exclusively mine, but another may imitate every act in its acquisition and possess similar knowledge. Another may not attempt to inhale the air which I am inhaling without invasion, but the unoccupied atmosphere is free to him, and he may imitate every act of my breathing. It is the same with water, light, and, as I have before shown, land. I cannot absorb the same sun-rays, I cannot drink the same water, I cannot occupy the same position in space, I cannot possess the same land, I cannot perform the same acts as my fellow; but I may always, where nature fails not, do acts similar to his, and in so doing vindicate my own rights and invade not his. Nor is there any miracle or break in the natural sequence when we come to mental function or literary work. The universality of law is the first dictum of science. I cannot think another man's thoughts, or write his book, but here, as everywhere, I may imitate him and do no wrong. Of course, this justification does not include the addition of falsification. Falsification is justified only when used defensively against invasion. All other deception is itself invasive, for all inoffensive men have a right to know the truth they need to use. B has a right to copy A's book provided he copies the author's name with the rest. He has no right to print on the title-page, 'This is B's book,' but he has a right to say, 'This is B's copy of A's book,' and in so doing fulfils all just claims of honor.

"It is just as great tyranny to force all men to be original as to force all to be alike."

The arguments of my Own Advocate appeared to me so self-evidenced, and attested by analogy and common sense, that I unhesitatingly gave sentence in his favor.

J. Wm. Lloyd.

Ideas Not Economic Quantities.

To the Editor of Liberty:

In Liberty, No. 184, there are two arguments side by side: one by Mr. Yarros on "Land and Ideas as Property," and the other against "Copyright" by John Beverley Robinson. The argument by Mr. Yarros is stated as follows: "It is assumed, without inquiry and without reason, that the same natural obstacles and difficulties which, in the case of land, constrain us to rest satisfied with the occupying ownership plan as the nearest approximation to equal liberty possible, exert and operate in the realm of ideas and abstract truths, and necessitate the same compromises. But the truth is that there is absolutely no reason for applying the principle of occupying ownership to the sphere of ideas. In the ownership and control of ideas equal liberty neither requires nor countenances any restrictions."

In the next column Mr. Robinson says: "The idea is the intellectual exertion made in producing, and, as such, is a part of the body of the producer. The working of the mind cannot be sold; only the material of nature, transformed by labor, whether mental or physical, can be dealt in commercially."

Both of these opposing thinkers are in the right. But each is discussing different premises, and, while they reason

logically, each necessarily comes to different conclusions. Consequently there is no agreement.

There is no correlation between equal liberty in occupying ownership of land and the ownership and control of ideas. No one can rightfully own land. But everyone necessarily owns his ideas. Land is not a human product; ideas are. He who conceives an idea has it in his own right. It is his property; but it is *non*-transferable. No conceiver of an idea can transfer it bodily from his own brain to that of another, and thus deprive himself of it. Hence it is not a merchantable or economic quantity. Economics is the science of exchange. But since ideas cannot be bodily transferred, they are necessarily outside the realm of Economics. Therefore, it is only *embodied* ideas that are exchangeable.

Mr. Yarros fails to see this vital fact in Economics. The editor of Liberty, Mr. Robinson, Tak Kak, myself, and others do see it. Hence the difference between us.

WILLIAM HANSON.

[While I am with Mr. Hanson in thinking that ideas are not properly economic quantities, it must not be inferred that I endorse his statements that there is no correlation between occupying ownership of land and ownership and control of ideas, that no one can rightfully own land, and that ideas are human products. — EDITOR LIBERTY.]

Is This Book Worth Reading?

[Chicago Herald.]

The Twentieth Century Publishing Company has published a book entitled "Letters to Farmers' Sons on the Questions of the Day, being Familiar Talks on Political Economy," by Henry S. Chase, M. D. At the outset, the doctor assures the "dear boys" that: "What I say will be my own thoughts, for I shall consult no books whatever." After reading this assurance, one is not surprised to find him defining political economy as "the knowledge or science of carrying on the affairs of cities, counties, and States in the best manner."

The doctor might have chosen another subject and said: "My dear boys, I am going to talk familiarly with you about the science of medicine. What I say will be my own thoughts; for I shall consult no books whatever. The science of medicine is the science of preparing or compounding medicines after the prescriptions of physicians."

Inasmuch as Dr. Chase advertises himself as a doctor of medicine and therefore may be presumed to know something about medical science, it is not altogether likely that he would begin his familiar talk to the "dear boys" about his own science in just that way. But it would be as reasonable as the beginning of his familiar talks on political economy in that way.

If he had consulted some books, instead of expressing contempt for them, — that is, for the recorded thoughts of others, — he might have learned that the science of political economy is not the art of carrying on public affairs any more than the science of medicine is the art of putting up prescriptions. He might have learned that political economy is the science of the economic organism of society, which is something very different from the political organism.

Revolutions by the Dozen.

It appears that, when Dr. Joseph Rodes Buchanan is not predicting geological and social revolutions, he is engaged in making revolutions. His revolutions create no more disturbance than his predictions, but that is not his fault. We are a wicked and frivolous people, if we can enjoy the following report, from the pen of the New York "Sun's" reviewer, of Dr. Buchanan's latest achievement.

There is richness in "Therapeutic Sarcognomy," by Dr. Joseph Rodes Buchanan. The book weighs five pounds and is wholly serious. Two plates, representing one a front and one a rear view of the human body, confront us at the start. Both are thickly littered with inscriptions; they look like the belfry of Trinity Church steeple, where generations of visitors have carved sentiments with their jack-knives. The inscriptions show, as nearly as we can gather, how soul and body are commingled, and how one breaks through and exhibits itself in spots upon the surface of the other. We do not understand it altogether, but it seems to be a sort of measles of the soul, with eruptive evidences very full and gratifying. We gather from these soul spots that the animality of man finds expression in his calves, and that some intimate relation exists between his shinbone and his aquatic inclination. Why the top of his foot is labelled vegetal and the bottom of it mineral we do not know, any more than we know why ambition, ostentation, and domesticity are associated with his biceps, or why intellect is marked upon his sternum or somnolence upon his diaphragm. We suppose it is all right. Scepticism is cheap, and though we might, if we were ailing, hesitate to submit ourselves to Dr. Buchanan, we believe that persons in health may brighten life by looking at his sarcognomic plate, and into his sockdologic book for a little while. We cannot confirm the Doctor's proposition that the posterior aspect of the thigh has the general character expressed by the word turbulence, or that the tongue as a healing influence is not to be compared to the top of the head, but we are free to say that we are not positive about anything to the contrary. We are not prepared to believe absolutely, with him, that the root of playfulness is in the shoulder blades, but we do agree to the proposition, struck with a bold die deep into the cover of his book, that this work is a revolution in biology. It is a whole team of a revolution, with a yellow dog under the wagon. We trust that the Doctor's map of soul spots may prove a source of honor and emolument to him. Artemus Ward is dead, but Mark Twain would be able to tell him how to get it properly before the public.

A Spectacle for Gods and Men.

[Ambrose Bierce in San Francisco Examiner.]

In my poor judgment this entire incident of the President's visit is infinitely discreditable to President and people. I do not go into the question of his motive in coming. Be that what it may, the manner of it seems to me, with all sincere deference to my editor's contrary opinion, an outrage upon all the principles and sentiments underlying republican institutions. In all but name it was a "royal progress," — the same costly ostentation; the same civic and military pomp; the same solemn and senseless adulation; the same abasement of spirit of the Many before the One. . . .

These tricks of servility with the softened names are the vestiges of an unvoluntary allegiance to power extraneous to the performer. They represent in our American life obedience and propitiation in their most primitive and odious forms. The man who speaks of them as "manifestations of a proper respect for the President's high office" is either a rogue, a dupe, or a journalist. They come to us out of a fascinating but terrible past as survivals of servitude. They speak a various language of oppression and the superstition of man-worship; they carry forward the traditions of the sceptre and the lash. Through "the plaudits of the people" may be heard always the faint far cry of the beaten slave.

Respect? Respect the good. Respect the wise. Respect the dead. Let the President look to it that he belong to one of these classes. His going about the country in gorgeous state and barbaric splendor as the guest of a thieving corporation, but at our expense, — shining and dining and swining, — unsouling himself of clotted nonsense in pickled platitudes calculated for the meridian of Coon Hollow, Indiana, but ingeniously adapted to each water-tank on the line of his absurd progress does not prove it, and the presumption of his "great office" is against him.

Can you not see, poor, misguided "fellow-citizens," how you permit your political taskmasters to forge leg-chains of your follies and load you down with them? Will nothing teach you that all this fuss-and-feathers, all this ceremony, all this official gorgeousness and brass-banding, this "manifestation of a proper respect for the Nation's head," this monkey-business, has no decent place in American life and American politics? Will no experience open your stupid eyes to the fact that these shows are but absurd imitations of royalty, to hold you silly while you are plundered by the managers of the performance? — that while you toss your greasy caps in air and sustain them by the ascending current of your senseless hurrahs the programmers are going through your blessed pockets and exploiting your holy dollars? No; you feel secure: 'power is of the People," and you can effect a change of robbers every four years. Inestimable privilege — to pull off the glutted leech and attach the lean one! And you cannot even choose among the lean leeches, but must accept those designated by the programmers and showmen who have the reptiles on tap! But then you are not "subjects"; you are "citizens" — there is much in that. Your tyrant is not a "King"; he is a "President." He does not occupy a "throne," but a "chair." He does not succeed to it by inheritance: he is pitchforked into it by the boss. Altogether, you are distinctly better off than the Russian *moujik* who wears his shirt outside his trousers and has never shaken hands with the Czar in all his life.

Money and Bank Checks.

[Galveston News.]

Accepting as correct the statement made by the New York "Evening Post" that ninety per cent. of the business transacted through the banks is done by means of checks, what is the inference as regards the probable necessity for money? At the first blush such figures have the effect of favoring an inference that the need for money must be very much smaller than it was at the time when something much less than ninety per cent. of the business was done by means of checks. Even if this be true, it does not answer the question how much money is needed. The declining rate of interest in any country is doubtless the most hopeful sign that progress is being made in the accumulation and mobilization of capital under good security. In the works of the economists the use of money is depicted as a facility replacing the cumbrous process of barter. As barter is the exchange of commodities, the use of money that is kept in view is the exchange of money for products. Instead of exchanging shoes for corn, the shoes are sold for money and with the money corn is purchased. Now in what proportion of the business done with checks is there on one side a delivery of a product as in this primary use of money? The answer may be difficult, yet it is sufficiently obvious to every city man that in a very large number of instances the check is not given in return for the delivery of a product. There are purchases of various bonds to a large amount, — government bonds, State bonds, county bonds, city bonds, railway bonds. These are simple evidences of lawful claims, not products. The check, an evidence of credit, is exchanged for the bond, contract, title, franchise, note, mortgage, bill, or other evidence of credit, — it is paper for paper. No product is delivered. There are dealings in cotton, coffee, grain, shares, titles to real estate. The same option or contract may be resold any number of times and nothing tangible delivered. The whole cotton crop may be sold once or twenty times over in a season at a place where not one-tenth of the cotton crop is ever delivered. Such facts show that the facility for trading in claims promotes such trading. If it promotes it to the extent of making "business" ten times as extensive as the actual delivery of products, then the use of checks to do nine-tenths of the "business" leaves the use of money where it was in relation to products. It is not intended here to disparage the use of checks or trading in any form of claim or security, but simply to point out that "business" can have indefinite expansion. In the abstract there is a possibility of doing fifty times as much business as now, without a single bushel of wheat or any other additional product being delivered, and of course the additional business would be done by means of writings, such as contracts and checks. Then the proportion of business done with checks would be much nearer one hundred per cent. of the whole than now, but such expansion of check business would rather entail some casual or incidental additional demands for cash, as in paying fees and so forth, than supersede the existing demand for money. This leaves the question what is the demand for coin an entirely open question. It simply disposes of the percentage fallacy as an insinuation that money is scarcely needed.

Beauties of Government.

[Clippings from the Press.]

WARSAW, May 12. Gen. Brock, chief of the gendarmerie, suspecting the police of duplicity, ordered that the students' quarters be searched at a certain hour, previous to which he himself searched the quarters and found nothing of an incriminating nature. The chief awaited the arrival of the police, and discovered that they had supplied themselves with revolutionary proclamations with the intention of manufacturing cases against the students. The matter has caused the greatest public indignation. The Governor-general has gone to St. Petersburg to try to hush up the scandal.

PITTSBURG, PA., May 11. Col. Robert G. Ingersoll may not lecture in Pittsburg. Mr. J. O. Brown, chief of the department of public safety, received a letter from David Henderson, manager of the Duquesne Theatre in Chicago, asking whether it would be in accordance with the law of Pittsburg to have Mr. Ingersoll deliver one of his lectures on Sunday night at a theatre. Chief Brown replied as follows:

In answer to yours of the 8th inst. I would reply that it would be directly contrary to law for Mr. Ingersoll to lecture upon the Sabbath day or evening where an admission is charged. I hope you will not attempt to have a lecture delivered, for it will be my imperative duty to prevent the same. This letter is written after consultation with the attorney of this department with reference to the law.

Chief Brown, in speaking on the subject, said: "I am unalterably opposed to opening the doors any wider on the Sunday question. We have freedom enough, and lectures of this kind are only gotten up for money, and I think we might as well open the theatres for theatrical performances as a lecture of the kind Mr. Ingersoll would naturally give."

A heresy, half Lutheran and half orthodox in character, and called "Stundism," is exercising the minds of the Russian authorities just now, the order having gone forth that all professors thereof shall be rigidly dealt with. Not only will public meetings be prevented, but all documents and pamphlets relating to "Stundism" will be suppressed, including all stories, legends, or minor works of Count Leo Tolstoi in which questions of religion or the family may be raised. All persons professing "Stundism" are to have notification thereof inserted on their passports, so that they may not be able to obtain employment in government service, or the steamboat or railway service, or any position under government control. Finally, Stundists guilty of proselytising will be deported to Siberia.

The fact that no Russian daily newspaper can go to press until it has passed the censorship accounts for the following announcement in the "Grashdanin": — "We are unable to insert the telegrams of our special correspondents this morning owing to the circumstance that the censor appointed to examine all telegrams was not at home all night; at least, he had not come home up to two o'clock in the morning."

NEW ORLEANS, LA., May 30. — That section of the McKinley bill which, while abolishing the duty on sugar, allows

a bounty of two cents a pound on sugar produced in this country, requires the planters to present an application to the commissioner of internal revenue, early in the year, announcing how much sugar they expect to raise, and furnishing bonds proportionate to the bounty they ask from the government. So far 36 of the 842 planters in the State have presented their applications and offered their bonds. They expect to produce 51,375,000 pounds of sugar. This will be an average of 1,408,000 pounds to the plantation, so that each plantation will receive over $28,000 bounty, and the 36 alone $1,027,500. Mr. Leon Godchaux, clothier, of New Orleans, asks for $248,800 on his five plantations; Messrs. P. Lehman & Bro., of Donaldsville, call for $115,000; Mr. H. L. Mennot, of New Iberia, for $100,000, and a number of others will take $50,000 or more out of the Federal treasury, unless there is an overflow or an early frost to injure the cane. If the applications keep up as they are doing, Louisiana alone will call for nearly $10,000,000 of sugar bounty.

"All with bottles tonight," remarked the lieutenant of station 3 in Boston on the night of Decoration Day, as he took a bottle from a prisoner just brought in. The holders of first, second, and third-class licenses were obliged to close up on Decoration Day, but the wholesale dealer and the fourth-class grocer did a rushing business, and the regular Saturday night quota of drunks was registered at all the stations.

PARIS, May 29. — The third art *salon* was opened in this city today. A sensation was caused by the police seizing two of the pictures representing Emperor William on horseback, trampling on the prostrate figure of France and carrying off women representing Alsace and Lorraine, the other depicting a desert strewn with skulls, one of which bore a likeness to the features of M. Jules Ferry.

WASHINGTON, June 3. — Postmaster-General Wanamaker has directed Maj. Pollock, chief of the free delivery service, and Mr. Scott, chief of the salary and allowance division, to go to Boston and make an investigation into the needs of the service in that city. The Boston postmaster, among other things, considers that 64 additional letter carriers are needed in order to properly serve the postal wants of the people of Boston. While this is true of Boston, the same demand for more clerks and more carriers comes from other cities. Altogether, if the demands from the offices throughout the country are acceded to, there will be at least 1,000 additional letter carriers appointed on the 1st of July next. This would increase the army of letter carriers to about 11,100 men. Congress, however, only appropriated sufficient money for the employment of 450 additional letter carriers, and if this number could be distributed around there would be no difficulty. But, according to the figures of the last census, there are 75 towns where the population is sufficient to bring them within the legal limits of towns which have a right to the free delivery service. Allowing four carriers to each of these towns, there would be left only 180 carriers to supply the demand which now aggregates about 1,000. It is, therefore, very evident to the post-office department officials that all the cities and towns are not going to get as many carriers as they have asked for, and that they will be compelled to get along as well as they can with substantially their present force.

The Devil, Myself, and Hell.

BY GEORGE FORREST.

He was an excessively modern devil, and, as he languidly seated himself in the arm-chair opposite me, he looked as though he had just stepped out of "Faust up to Date." He was a perfect dress-suit Mephisto.

My surprise at seeing the devil so close to me gave vent to itself in the question, which I asked in a voice combining volume and expression in about equal proportion:

"Where in Hell did you come from?"

The devil laughed loudly.

"Really," he said, "your question strikes me in a ludicrous manner: it is so like profanity. Excuse my mirth, please."

He leaned back and laughed still louder.

I was angry; and I made a remark, the tenor of which was that the color devils were generally painted was not of a sufficiently sable hue. But he didn't seem to mind my implication in the least.

"I came from Hell," he at last replied, "but I cannot tell you from what particular spot: Hell is so vague, you know. It is a delightful place, with all its faults — ever been there?"

I indignantly replied that I had not been there, didn't want to go there, and didn't care to hear about it.

"Oh, yes, you do," replied the devil. "It isn't at all what you think it; I am sure you'd like to live there. Honestly, I think you would."

I was growing interested. "What is it like?" I asked.

The devil took the monocle out of his left eye, hemmed a few times, and then began:

"Hell is much like the earth. It has its cities and towns; its theatres, concert-halls, and churches; its" —

"What!" I gasped, "churches in Hell?"

"Why not?" he replied. "Of course we have churches. What would our morals be without churches?"

He winked at me, and said:

"Of course we — the intelligent devils — pay no attention to theological argument, nowadays; but then, what would the poor laborers do if they had no one to preach a heaven to them?"

I was stupefied. "Go on," I said.

"We," he continued, "pay more attention to sociological problems. We are bringing heaven nearer to the poor devils than the theologians did. We tell them that in the future Hell itself will be a Heaven — we generally keep this future far enough ahead to be quite misty. There are some, however, who are drawing that future nearer; and still others who declare that the only real heaven is today. The Nationalists, now" —

"What!" I exclaimed. "Nationalists in Hell!"

"They are in the majority there," he replied.

I took the devil by the hand, and said earnestly: "I believe you. Go on."

"Yes," he continued, "the Nationalists are in the majority. Their Heaven is quite popular, — only about a generation ahead, — and the old devils tell the young devils that perhaps their (the young devils') children will live to see it. It's a delightful theory, theirs, and so simple: All will govern each, and each will govern all, and there will be no majority rule; don't you see — all *will* govern all; that *will* settles it. It is just as simple as two and two *are* sixty-four; the fact that two and two cannot be sixty-four has nothing whatever to do with it."

The devil paused for a while in order to switch to another phase of the question.

"Then there are the single-taxers — but single-tax is about burned out in Hell; and the Individualists and Anarchists, they are coming forward with their brilliant arguments. Their discussions usually end in a thoroughly individualistic manner, something like this:

"Affirmative — Having proven that my opponents don't know what they are talking about, I leave them still talking.

"Negative — Having firmly established the case in my favor, I may consider the question as settled."

Again the devil paused, and again switched his thought.

"We have societies in Hell," he said, "for the suppression of vice and for the suppression of literature, and the voice of our postmaster-general is frequently heard in both these societies; and it is whispered that he is as familiar with the object of one as he is unfamiliar with the other: need I specify?

"Then there are the middle-classes in Hell, the dear old *bourgeoisie*. They are patriotic and make such good citizens, and they are very respectable. They are quite literary also, and read the magazines and novels: respectable magazines with articles about Africa, and respectable novels, say like Walter Besant's. They cultivate art also, but only moral art, remember; and the drama, the respectable drama (Mr. and Mrs. Kendal), how they love it!" —

I interrupted the devil.

"Do you know," I said, "it is as though I had been there, in Hell; it seems very familiar to me, it is so like" —

"Perhaps you have been there," he interrupted.

"Then where, what, is it?" I asked.

"It is a camera," he replied.

"And it pictures what?"

He threw open the shutters.

"Look," he said.

And I looked out on the street. Pedestrians were passing; trucks, buggies, horse-cars, baby-carriages; fat men, lean men, women to match; dogs — Then a sudden light broke upon me, and I cried:

"Ah! I know what Hell pictures."

But when I turned, the devil was gone.

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